

Kennedy Cuts Week-End For Crisis Talk With Rusk

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WASHINGTON, April. 30—President Kennedy cut short his week-end at his country estate this afternoon and flew back to Washington. Immediately on his arrival he went into conference with his diplomatic and military advisers.

Those at the meeting included Secretary of State Dean Rusk; Robert S. McNamara, Defense Secretary; Paul H. Nitze, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; U. Alexis Johnson, State Department political officer, and Harlan Cleveland, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Organization Affairs.

The group met with the President for about ninety minutes. Then Mr. Kennedy and Secretary Rusk continued to talk for some time.

Andrew Hatcher, assistant White House press secretary, said the President would have no statement to make on the meeting. However, it seemed likely that Mr. Kennedy wished to discuss with Mr. Rusk and his other advisers the latest developments in the crisis in Laos and the almost equally disturbing situation in South Vietnam.

Reds' Motives Suspected

The President had originally planned to return tomorrow morning. He took off by helicopter from the lawn of Glen Ora, his country retreat at Middleburg, Va., at 5:02 P. M. and arrived at the White House grounds at 5:23.

Secretary Rusk was closeted most of the day with his principal advisers at the State Department in preparation for a meeting of the National Security Council at 4 P. M. tomorrow. This will be the fourth meeting of the council the President has summoned in nine days.

The news from Laos that the pro-Communist rebel regime had offered to meet at the village of Ban Nain, within the next three days, military representatives of Prince Boun Oum, the former Premier, aroused some military hopes here that a cease-fire was in prospect.

To some officials it seemed that the successive proposals for a cease-fire by the insurgent forces and the Royal

usually approaching agreement of a conference site that would save face for both sides.

Nevertheless, there was an underlying skepticism of Communist intentions. It was feared that Prince Souvanna Phouma, whom the rebels recognize as Premier, and the military leaders of the Pathet Lao movement would prolong the cease-fire negotiations until the insurgents had captured a good part of the territory still in Government control.

Meanwhile, the Administration has decided to increase by \$41,000,000 the amount of military aid to be made available to South Vietnam in the fiscal year beginning July 1.

The additional money, almost all of which will be spent on military supplies, will approximately double the military aid that the United States has been providing annually to the Government of President Ngo Dinh Diem.

In the two-hour meeting of the expanded National Security Council held at the White House yesterday, informed sources said, the situation in South Vietnam was considered at length along with the more immediate crisis in Laos.

Attending the meeting were Frederick G. Nolting, the new Ambassador to Saigon, and Lieut. Gen. Lionel C. McGarr, head of the United States Military Assistance Group in South Vietnam.

The Pentagon and the State Department have been deeply disturbed by military developments in southeastern Laos in the last three days. Reports from Vientiane and Saigon indicate that the towns of Tchepone and Muong Phine are in imminent danger of capture by Pathet Lao forces.

Towns on Major Highway

The towns are on a principal road leading from Laos into South Vietnam. Tchepone is below the Seventeenth Parallel, the boundary line between North and South Vietnam established by the 1954 Geneva accord that ended the Indochina war.

Tchepone, according to reports reaching here, is surrounded by at least 1,000 Pathet Lao troops. If the towns should fall, the way would be open for the insurgents to communicate much more easily with Hanoi, capital of North Vietnam.

Furthermore, officials here note the loss of the towns by the Pathet Lao forces would open a funnel down which North Vietnamese Communist troops could slip into South Vietnam. Diplomatic reports said the Soviet shift to the Laotian rebels was continuing at a "normal" rate—about twenty plane-loads a day.

There was a flurry of speculation after yesterday's National Security Council meeting that the President and his advisers were considering a deadline on a cease-fire and intervention if the deadline was not met.

In a few cautious comments to which officials limited themselves today, however, there was no indication that the President had reached a decision on either of these matters.

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